

SENECA MEDIA, INC.

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Genesee Country Express

113 Main St. • Dansville, New York

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We the People

This is the 15th in a weekly series, "Two Hundred Years Ago This Week," made available as a public service by the New York State Bicentennial Commission.

Although the word "slavery" never appears in the Constitution, several parts of the new form of government recognized and even protected the institution of slavery. The clause dealing with the slave trade aroused angry debate in the Constitutional Convention.

To many Americans the principles of the Revolution stood starkly in contrast to the institution of slavery. Consequently in October, 1774, the Continental Congress prohibited the importation of slaves. In June, 1776, Thomas Jefferson condemned the slave trade in his draft of the Declaration of Independence, but Congress deleted the passage, according to Jefferson, "in compliance to South Carolina and Georgia" which wanted to reinstate the nefarious traffic. Yet, throughout the Revolution, Americans abstained from the slave trade. Furthermore, during the war several states abolished slavery or prohibited the slave trade.

After the restoration of peace in 1783, merchants and planters revived the slave trade. Opponents of slavery, particularly Quakers in Pennsylvania, New York and New England, realizing their inability to abolish slavery completely, concentrated their efforts on state prohibitions of the slave trade. Because it was easy to demonstrate the inhumanity of this odious business, several states between 1783 and early 1787 passed laws prohibiting the slave trade or tightening earlier laws restricting the trade. But because state-by-state actions against the slave trade and slavery in general came slowly, a national prohibition against the slave trade would have far greater effect and seemed obtainable. But, when most of the states agreed to grant Congress the power to regulate trade in 1786, Georgia and South Carolina refused to concede any authority over the slave trade.

Because Congress lacked power in this area, Congressman Rufus King of Massachusetts suggested that the slave trade "would be a material Subject" for the Constitutional Convention. In early June, 1787, the Pennsylvania Society for the Abolition of Slavery prepared a petition to the Convention asking for an end to the slave trade. One of the Society's secretaries, Tench Coxe, gave the petition to Benjamin Franklin, the Society's president and a delegate to the Constitutional Convention. Coxe, however, strongly advised Franklin against raising the issue, and no evidence suggests that Franklin ever presented the petition.

On Aug. 21, the Convention began the debate on the provision of the draft constitution that prohibited Congress from taxing or banning the importation of slaves. The debate, which took place over five days, had great difficulty in sorting out moral, political, and economic issues. In the end, the delegates achieved a compromise which merely delayed a final decision on the issue. The compromise fully satisfied none of the delegates, but it managed to avoid offending delegates to the point of stalling

progress on the constitution or eventually blocking its ratification by the representatives of a white, male electorate.

Luther Martin of Maryland opened the debate with a proposal that the Convention provide either a federal prohibition of the slave trade or a tax on each slave imported. According to Martin, slavery "was inconsistent with the principles of the revolution." It would be "dishonorable to the American character" to have the Constitution protect the slave trade. Religion and humanity called for the prohibition of such a despicable enterprise.

John Rutledge of South Carolina asserted that "religion and humanity had nothing to do with this question—Interest alone" was "the governing principle." Not only was it in the Southern interest to import slaves, but, Rutledge argued, Northerners would also prosper from the slave trade. The more slaves in the south, the greater quantity of staple crops for Northern vessels to carry.

Oliver Ellsworth of Connecticut agreed with Rutledge. "What enriches a part enriches the whole." And because the states were "the best judges of their particular interests," Ellsworth supported letting the states import whatever they wanted. "The morality or wisdom of slavery are considerations belonging to the States themselves." This view would also solve the problems for the Constitutional Convention.

South Carolina delegate Charles Pinckney warned the Convention that his state would "never receive the plan if it prohibits the slave trade." If left alone, Pinckney argued, South Carolina "may perhaps" follow the example of the other states in prohibiting the slave trade; but, for the time being, Congress should not be empowered to meddle in state concerns.

The next day, Aug. 22, the debate over the slave trade continued. Roger Sherman of Connecticut "disapproved" the trade, yet "the public good did not require," in his opinion, its prohibition. George Mason disagreed. Most of the states, he pointed out, had already prohibited the slave trade. If Georgia and South Carolina continued this "infernal traffic," they would not only populate their own states but they would fill up the western lands with slaves.

Mason, a slaveowner himself, believed that slavery presented a clear danger to America. Slavery discouraged the arts and manufactures and made free men "despise labor." The possibility of slave insurrections always loomed, especially during wartime. Finally, slavery produced a "most pernicious effect on manners. Every master of slaves is born a petty tyrant." Such an attitude instilled in a population was not conducive for the continuation of republican government. Mason warned his fellow delegates that "the judgment of heaven" would be brought on America for its "national sins." To those who argued that the regulation of the slave trade belonged to the states, Mason suggested that it ranked among those rights "now to be properly given up." The debate had come full circle, but the delegates had decided nothing. More debate would resound in the Pennsylvania State House before the delegates would move toward compromise.

Old Photo Album

W. H. Dick, Boats & Bicycles, Dansville, N. Y.



Dick's Patent Rudderless Boat Propeller. Send for Circular.

ON THE WATER — This is an 1892 advertisement placed by Dansville's William Henry Dick to promote sales of his brainchild — a propulsion device for small boats. Mr. Dick had manufactured bicycles then adapted the chain and sprocket principle to turn paddle wheels. Operators, in this case, used their hands, instead of their feet, to furnish power. William, son of a shoe store proprietor, devised a felt shoe in 1882 which he called "Fireside Comfort." At one time, 85 girls were employed to keep abreast of sales. A pair of Fireside Comforts went to General U. S. Grant during an illness. The bewhiskered army commander sent a personal letter of thanks to Mr. Dick. The paddle wheel affair, shown here, failed to attract customers. (Wilfred J. Rauber)

Yesteryears — A Look at History

Old Zimmerhackle — Observations, philosophy, humor and advice by Joseph W. Burgess, co-founder and editor of the Breeze before the turn of the century.

The word "bow" is a funny thing. Just look at it. It means to make an obeisance; it means a thing to shoot arrows with; it means the front end of a boat; it means a necktie; it means a fiddlestick and if you put a "wow" after it, you made a dog's bark. No wonder foreigners can't understand us.

Vacationists are coming home By all the trains and stages, And now the winds are whispering Where are the summer wages? —J.W.B.

—1897— Flies are in all their glory just now. Coon hunting is the latest moonlight diversion.

Rev. A. O. Sykes is rapidly learning to ride a bicycle and will soon challenge some of his brethren in a race. Editor Woodruff wants to trade his snare drum for a bicycle. The neighbors probably won't let him pound it anymore.

—1907— Alonzo J. Whiteman has been transferred from Auburn Prison to Dannemora Prison. The annual excursion to New York City via the Lackawanna Railroad is planned. The round trip fare is \$9.

Jack Barber has rented the shed and barn on what is known as the Heiman property, corner of Elizabeth and Exchange Sts. Barber will conduct a livery, sale and exchange stable.

—1917— Paul Blum has gone to South Bend, Ind., where he will enter Notre Dame University.

The White motor car now being tried out on the D&M railway is going to prove one of the greatest travel conveniences ever inaugurated in Dansville. The car is comfortable, roomy with ample seating for 24 passengers and can easily and safely make the trip to Mt. Morris in 40 minutes.

—1927— Mr. and Mrs. Clarence Lee were winners of the first prize in the waltz contest at the Palace on Loon Lake Friday night.

A double murder occurred near Candadea when two State Troopers were shot to death by Roy Wagner, a 23-year-old farmer. The troopers were serving a warrant on the man for passing a fraudulent \$6 check.

—1937— Charles Robson of Dansville is the only new member of the Groveland High School faculty.

The Dansville American Legion Drum and Bugle Corps, under the leadership of Jacob M. Fries, took high honors at LeRoy yesterday afternoon and an Avoca in the evening.

—1947— Fred Allen, famed radio comedian, is spending the week at the Physical Culture Hotel here.

Dansville Central School District's total enrollment this year is 1,241 pupils, which is 13 over last year's record number. Registration in St. Mary's School is 143 and St. Patrick's School has 91 students enrolled.

—1957— The parched throats of the elbow-benders will have to stay parched today with all beer, wine and liquor sales banned during the duration of the county primary elections.

Dansville firemen put their pikepoles to good use in Sunday's blaze near the Maple St. storage of Kelly Bros. Nursery as they

tried to get at the smouldering bales of excelsior and moss used for packing trees and shrubs. Fire Chief Al Holbrook estimated damage at \$3,000.

The Board of Water and Sewer Commissioners has voted to do something about one of Dansville's growing pains by approving a general water rental increase to provide funds for extending lines.

—1967— To bring into closer relation the home and the school — so that parents and teachers may cooperate in the training of children — will be the goal of the Dansville's Parent Teachers Association for 1967-68.

The largest group of pupils to ever eat lunch at the Junior High, two classes in one room at the Senior High and the unbelievable absence of tears in the Elementary School highlighted yesterday's opening of the new school term. As expected, enrollment in the three public schools and at St. Mary's School set a new record with 2,686 students answering the bell.

Deno Pappas came up with a golfer's dream Sunday, scoring a hole-in-one on the long par three seventh hole at Brae Burn.

—1977— About one year after its inception, Bradner House Inc. this fall will begin renovation work on the old Dansville Hospital.

Stanley V. Bonner, director of operations for three Foster

Wheeler Energy Corp plants in the United States, will be guest speaker at the Chamber of Commerce Industrial Day dinner in Brae Burn Recreation Center Saturday night.

Miss Leah Minemier of Dansville has been elected secretary of the Senior Class at Cornell University in Ithaca. She is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Robert Minemier of 20 Chestnut Ave.

A former Dansville man, Michael Rowan, has joined the law firm of Johnson, Bromberg, Leeds and Riggs in Dallas, Tex. He is the son of Mr. and Mrs. John Rowan of Dallas, longtime Dansville residents.

Almost \$2,000 still is needed to cover the purchase of new Christmas decorations for the downtown section. The retail Merchants Committee of the Dansville Chamber of Commerce has ordered 36 seven-foot Christmas trees with bulbs at a cost of \$5,022.

Navy Interior Communications Electrician Third Class Dan M. Smalt of 51 Seward St., is currently on an extended deployment in the Mediterranean Sea.

Our two foreign exchange students have arrived and started school this week. Per Backstad of Sweden is the "adopted" son of Mr. and Mrs. Nick VanDurne and Sven Wolf of Germany is residing with Mr. and Mrs. Jack Shepherd.

Looks Around Our Town

The Bystander

By JIM CONWAY

They're back in the tree-checking business.

A survey of historic trees was taken by what is now the Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) more than 60 years ago. By now, many of these have disappeared.

Every so often, you read about a very old or very large tree being taken down, sometimes rows of them. Thus, the DEC is currently updating the state survey and cooperating with them is the New York County Historians Association.

Livingston County Historian Pat Schaap needs your help in finding historic trees not on the State Register. These that are include the Torture Tree in Cuylerville, the Wadsworth Oaks in Genesee and the world's largest black locust at the home of George and May Weidman in Ossian.

Earlier this year, Mrs. Regina Kingston of Genesee discovered a very old tree on Bath in the Town of Groveland while enroute to Scottsburg. Others have also contacted the historian's office including Bob Latimer of Genesee who found a very large cottonwood near Five Arch Bridge in Avon. And, Mary Helen Meade, the deputy county historian, reported a "lovely large oak" on her property at Conesus Lake.

So if you know about a tree of unusual size or age, or one associated with famous people or historic sites or events, contact the county historian at 30 Center St. in Genesee. In other words—become tree watchers and discoverers.

Former Dansville resident Philip Green is ill at his home in Florida and friends are encouraged to send him a card to help cheer his days. His address is 516 N. W. 52nd St., Boca Raton, Fla. 33431.

Green formerly lived on West Avenue here and was in the plumbing and heating business.

Most of you had to see the World War II B-1 bomber flying over the skies Saturday in conjunction with the Chamber of Commerce balloon rally. That same plane holds a special fascination for Gordon Lane of Farmington in Ontario County.

He called it a "chance of a lifetime" when bidding \$150 for a 30-minute ride in the B-17 was prepared to go up to \$250. A World War II veteran, Lane was the Finger Lakes Association to raise funds for tourism promotional efforts.

The ride was donated by the National Warplane Museum at Genesee, home base for the bomber. Lane who served with the medics in the South Pacific has never flown in any vintage plane but has always been fascinated by them. There were 13,000 B-17's built during the war but only nine still fly today.

Here's a somber thought. The state's high school graduating classes of the year 2000 began kindergarten this week. However, officials believe a very large number of them will drop out of school before they get the chance to flip over tassels on graduation caps.

These officials point out that the proportion of students who fail to complete high school is now more than 27 percent nationally. And if the current trend persists, it will grow and perhaps as many as three million youngsters in this year's kindergarten classes will never graduate. This trend must be reversed—some how or some way.

Have a good day and a nice forever.

LEGAL

LEGAL NOTICE OF SPECIAL MEETING OF THE QUALIFIED VOTERS OF WAYLAND CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

Notice is hereby given that a special meeting of the qualified voters of the Wayland Central School District will be held at the Wayland Central School Gymnasium in said District on the 28th day of October, 1987 between the hours of 12:00 Noon and 8:00 P.M. The following propositions will be submitted for voter approval at said meeting:

PROPOSITION #1 RENOVATION, EQUIPMENT AND SITE WORK

Shall the following resolution be adopted to wit: RESOLVED THAT THE BOARD OF EDUCATION OF THE WAYLAND CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT IS HEREBY AUTHORIZED TO UNDERTAKE CERTAIN CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS CONSISTING OF RENOVATION AND RECONSTRUCTION OF THE SCHOOL BUILDING COMPLEX WITHIN THE SCHOOL DISTRICT, TOGETHER WITH SITE IMPROVEMENTS AND ACQUISITION OF ORIGINAL FURNISHINGS EQUIPMENT AND APPARATUS REQUIRED IN CONNECTION THEREWITH FOR SUCH RECONSTRUCTION AND THAT SUCH SUM OF \$3,190,000, OR SO MUCH THEREOF AS MAY BE NECESSARY, SHALL BE RAISED BY THE LEVY OF A TAX TO BE COLLECTED IN ANNUAL INSTALLMENTS; AND, IN ANTICIPATION OF SUCH TAX, DEBT OBLIGATIONS OF THE SCHOOL DISTRICT SHALL BE ISSUED.

PROPOSITION #2 CLASSROOMS, EQUIPMENT AND GYMNASIUM

Shall the following resolution be adopted to wit: RESOLVED THAT THE BOARD OF EDUCATION OF THE WAYLAND CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT IS HEREBY AUTHORIZED TO UNDERTAKE

LEGAL

CERTAIN CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS CONSISTING OF ADDITIONS TO THE SCHOOL BUILDING COMPLEX WITHIN THE SCHOOL DISTRICT, INCLUDING, WITHOUT LIMITATION, THE ADDITION OF CLASSROOMS AND A NEW GYMNASIUM, TOGETHER WITH ACQUISITION OF ORIGINAL FURNISHINGS, EQUIPMENT AND APPARATUS REQUIRED IN CONNECTION THEREWITH FOR SUCH RECONSTRUCTION AND SCHOOL USE, AT AN ESTIMATED MAXIMUM COST OF \$4,310,000, AND THAT SUCH SUM OF \$4,310,000, OR SO MUCH THEREOF AS MAY BE NECESSARY, SHALL BE RAISED BY THE LEVY OF A TAX TO BE COLLECTED IN ANNUAL INSTALLMENTS; AND, IN ANTICIPATION OF SUCH TAX, DEBT OBLIGATIONS OF THE SCHOOL DISTRICT SHALL BE ISSUED.

By Order of the BOARD OF EDUCATION OF WAYLAND CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
Roger W. George
Business Administrator
District Clerk

9-3-7E CONCURRENT PUBLIC NOTICE

NOTICE TO PUBLIC OF: 1. NO SIGNIFICANT EFFECT ON THE ENVIRONMENT AND 2. NOTICE TO PUBLIC OF REQUEST FOR RELEASE OF FUNDS

Date 9/26/87
Applicant: Village of Wayland
Address: 15 Main Street,
Wayland, New York 14572
Telephone: (716) 728-2800

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT EFFECT ON THE ENVIRONMENT

TO ALL INTERESTED AGENCIES, GROUPS, OR PERSONS:

On or about September 14 the above-named will request the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development to release Federal funds under Title I of the Housing and Community Developmental Act of 1974 (PL93-383) for the

following project: Project Title: Wayland Central Business District Comprehensive Program

Purpose: Residential, Commercial and Public Facility above financed in part (\$600,000) improvements in the Wayland with Block Grant funds from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) under Title I of the Housing and Urban Development Act of 1974, as amended. The above named is certifying to HUD that Village of Wayland and Mr. Bert Bonadonna, in his official capacity as Mayor, consent to accept the jurisdiction of the Federal courts if an action is brought to enforce responsibilities in relation to environmental reviews, decision-making, and actions; and that these responsibilities have been satisfied. The legal effect of the certification is that upon its approval the Village of Wayland may use the Block Grant funds and HUD will have satisfied its responsibilities under the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969. HUD will accept an objection to its approval only if it is on one of the following bases: (a) that the certification was not in fact executed by the certifying officer or other officer of applicant approved by HUD; or (b) that applicant's environmental review record for the project indicates omission of a required decision, finding, or step applicable to the project in the environmental review process. Objections must be prepared and submitted in accordance with the required procedures (24 CFR Part 58) and may be addressed to HUD, 107 Delaware Avenue, Buffalo, New York 14202.

No further environmental review of such project is proposed to be conducted prior to the request for release of Federal funds.

All interested agencies, groups or persons disagreeing with this decision are invited to submit written comments for consideration to the office of the Village Clerk. Such written comments should be received at the (address specified above) on or before September 14. All such comments so received will be considered and the above named will not request the release of Federal funds or take any administrative action on the project prior to the date specified

in the preceding sentence. REQUEST FOR RELEASE OF FUNDS

The above named will undertake the project described Commercial and Public Facility above financed in part (\$600,000) improvements in the Wayland with Block Grant funds from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) under Title I of the Housing and Urban Development Act of 1974, as amended. The above named is certifying to HUD that Village of Wayland and Mr. Bert Bonadonna, in his official capacity as Mayor, consent to accept the jurisdiction of the Federal courts if an action is brought to enforce responsibilities in relation to environmental reviews, decision-making, and actions; and that these responsibilities have been satisfied. The legal effect of the certification is that upon its approval the Village of Wayland may use the Block Grant funds and HUD will have satisfied its responsibilities under the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969. HUD will accept an objection to its approval only if it is on one of the following bases: (a) that the certification was not in fact executed by the certifying officer or other officer of applicant approved by HUD; or (b) that applicant's environmental review record for the project indicates omission of a required decision, finding, or step applicable to the project in the environmental review process. Objections must be prepared and submitted in accordance with the required procedures (24 CFR Part 58) and may be addressed to HUD, 107 Delaware Avenue, Buffalo, New York 14202.

Objections to either the Notice of Finding of No Significant Effect on the Environment or the Notice of Request for Release of Funds on bases other than those stated above will not be considered by HUD. Those interested agencies, groups, or persons wishing to object must specify which notice they are making comment on.

Certifying Officer: Bert Bonadonna, Mayor
Village of Wayland
15 Main Street
Wayland, New York 14572

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